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Oscar Lewis Awardee: Philip P. Choy

BY DAVID M. RUBIALES

PHILIP P. CHOY IS THE 2011 RECIPIENT of the Club's Oscar Lewis award for history. He is a prolific writer, panelist, and college lecturer, having co-authored significant books such as *A History of the Chinese in California: A Syllabus* (1969) and *The Coming Man: 19th Century Perceptions of the Chinese* (1994); and most recently authored *Canton Footprints: Sacramento's Chinese Legacy* (2007). He is also the author of the case report that placed the Angel Island Immigration Station on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1969, Philip, in collaboration with Him Mark Lai, taught the first college course in the United States devoted to Chinese-American history.

Most of us who carry the moniker "historian" have arrived at that status in a fairly conventional way, first earning a bachelor's degree in history, and then graduate school, followed by gaining a position at a college or university. Philip, however, followed a quite different and unconventional path to the title "historian," and therefore provides us a much more interesting and inspiring story.

Philip was born in San Francisco's Chinatown in 1926. As with most immigrants from China during the nineteenth century, Philip's family was from Guangdong province in southern China. His maternal grandfather arrived in California in 1882; and Philip is therefore a third generation Californian on his mother's side.

Philip grew up in the heart of Chinatown in a family of butchers — his grandfather and father were both butchers trained in the "western style" of butchering — a trade that he would learn and practice himself. Philip understood the precarious and limiting boundaries that surrounded the ethnic enclave of Chinatown. Philip states that "we knew our place," but at

the same time his parents sought to instill pride in his Chinese heritage by sending him to Chinese school in the evenings, after he had attended public school during the day. The teachers at the Chinese school emphasized to the students that as Chinese they were from an older and more prestigious civilization than white Americans.

But Philip, in spite of the Chinese nationalism that surrounded him at the school, thought to himself: "If we are better, then what are we doing here (confined to Chinatown) in this situation?" Thus, at a young age, began his penchant for skepticism, a necessary characteristic for a future scholar intent on debunking the historical mythology of the dominant culture. During his student years in Chinatown Philip was always interested in history, particularly in the role of the underdog, with whom he strongly identified. He was also intensely interested in the role of the Chinese in the American West, understanding that his own roots and identity as an American would be found in that history. He stated in an interview with the author that "without knowledge of your own history you are not a valid person."

Galileo High School was the closest high school to Chinatown and Philip attended it, but at the age of sixteen, already a proficient butcher, he left

THE BOOK CLUB IS CELEBRATING ITS
Centennial!

A grand variety of events, publications, and activities will take place in 2012. ¶ Do you have special memories of BCC gatherings, camaraderie, and/or publications? Write about them for a special issue of *The Quarterly News-Letter*.

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Galileo without graduating and went to work at a butcher shop in Sacramento. He worked there for two years — World War II was now underway — and then returned to San Francisco and enrolled at San Francisco City College and waited for the draft board to call him for induction into the US army. He was able to complete two semesters before being called up and then served uneventfully in the US Army Air Corps in the American occupation of Germany. He returned to California in 1948 and enrolled in the School of Architecture at UC Berkeley, using the GI Bill to finance his studies.

Philip received his architectural degree in 1952 and began practicing his profession. For the rest of the 1950s and most of the 1960s, he devoted himself to work and family, but his interest in history, specifically Chinese-American history, had not diminished. In 1968, two events converged in his life that would propel him into the role of an influential and respected historian.

The first event was the student strike at San Francisco State College that began in November 1968. The strike was led by the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) which demanded that the college create an Ethnic Studies program and nationally desired the U.S. Government to end the Vietnam War. Drawing energy both from the Civil Rights Movement and the anti-war movement, the strike effectively closed down the college and dragged on until the early spring of 1969, when the college administration finally agreed to create a School of Ethnic Studies. The war, of course, continued.

The second event occurred simultaneously; not in the turbulent atmosphere of college protests but rather in the quiet offices of the Chinese Historical Society of America (CHSA). The CHSA was founded in 1963, and in 1969 Philip became its president. Since its founding, but especially after the rise of the ethnic studies movement, the CHSA had been fielding requests from educators for material about Chinese-American history. Those requests had multiplied as the protest-era of the 1960s had gained momentum and the historical society decided to prepare something that could be given out as a matter of course, thereby avoiding the repetition of effort.

The end product was *A History of the Chinese in America: A Syllabus*, researched and written by Philip and two collaborators, Him Mark Lai and Thomas W. Chinn; Philip was listed as the editor, while Choy and Lai were listed as associate editors. Their work is far more than a syllabus, which is a

misnomer, for it is actually an eighty-one page outline with interesting detail. On page fifty-eight, for example, the reader is informed that in Yuba City, in 1884, the owner of the city's first cannery announced that no Chinese would be employed in the new enterprise, but then had to backtrack when he discovered that nobody else knew how to make the cans and Chinese workers had to be hired after all. This episode demonstrates that Chinese immigrants were not merely victims at the hands of others but were able to practice "self-agency," the ability to control events from a disadvantaged position.

The *Syllabus* reflected the training of its three authors. None of the three were trained academic historians, but each was trained in a profession or craft that required great attention to detail and accuracy. Philip was an architect, Him Mark Lai was a mechanical engineer, and Thomas W. Chinn was a printer who worked at the presses of Lawton and Alfred Kennedy. Each author was also instilled with a passion for the stories of their Chinese immigrant ancestors and their contributions to California society. Philip modestly states that "I didn't know what I was doing; I just had a conviction of what needed to be done."

The first printing of the *Syllabus* was printed by the Kennedys, who did not charge for the work. It has since been reprinted several times.

Carey McWilliams, in his book *Brothers Under the Skin* (1943), wrote that "It would be impossible to trace the history of the Chinese in this country without at the same time writing the history of California from 1850–1900." The *Syllabus* now provided credibility to McWilliams' provocative assertion.

The *Syllabus* was presented at a one-day seminar, and afterward Philip and Mark Lai were approached by the History Department at San Francisco State College to teach a course in Chinese-American history, the first, as noted above, to be taught at a college in the United States.

Philip was under no illusions about the motivations of the administration of the college. He knew that the administration had acted under pressure and not entirely out of conviction, but he also knew that he and his teaching partner, Mark Lai, had something valuable to offer the college. The two of them, who were close friends, had traveled throughout California collecting

material for the *Syllabus*. They had good material that no one else had put together in such a manner. Once the class began, however, Philip found himself in an ironic twist, facing student activists who distrusted him for his willingness to cooperate with the college administration by teaching the class — even though they themselves had demanded that the course be offered. But he was not intimidated by them because, as he has said, "I knew what they needed."

Philip continued to teach at SF State for several years and also later taught at UC Berkeley, the University of San Francisco, and community colleges, as well. His resume as an historian grew with each succeeding decade after 1970. He presented at numerous historical conferences, authored articles for the California Historical Society Quarterly, consulted on various historical projects and exhibits, and authored or co-authored two more books devoted to the history of Chinese Americans. He also, from 1965 to 2000, maintained a private architectural practice. He is currently working on a tour guide for Chinatown, his birthplace.

Introducing Clifford Burke

BY GEORGE K. FOX

INTRODUCING CLIFFORD BURKE and telling his complete story could be a daunting task and worth a book in itself. This will not happen this evening at our Oscar Lewis Awards, but I will supply a personal touch. I would like to share my stories of Clifford.

My first job in San Francisco after arriving in 1963 was with the Wilson-Rich Paper Co., who at that time were the West Coast representatives for the line of fine English and Asian hand-made papers imported by the New York firm of Andrews Nelson Whitehead. Among other duties, I was in charge of their distribution on the West Coast. In 1966, while the whole social and political protest movement was in full swing in the Haight Ashbury and Berkeley, a scruffy fellow with a beard kept showing up at our warehouse South of Market to buy 8 1/2 x 11 copy paper in 10 ream boxes, which he would carry away strapped on the back of his motorcycle.

I remember clearly that he would come to the warehouse, approach the shipping clerk — an old rough Italian guy — and say, “Pickup for Cranium Press.” The response was, “the what press?,” and Clifford Burke would just reach up and tap the top of his head. “Oh, okay, your paper’s over here,” and off Clifford would go, down the Federal Street alley with twenty reams of paper on the back of his motorcycle.

After this happened a few times I decided I had better find out what this Clifford Burke was up to. I went out to 642 Shrader Street in the Haight Ashbury to find the tiniest print shop I had ever seen, a miniature store front. Inside, there was Clifford pounding away on an 11 x 17 Multilith offset press, printing flyers and handbills for the War Resisters League, the Psychedelic Shop, and other politically active protest groups in Berkeley.

We talked. What Clifford wanted to do was print books. He had become interested in type and printing in college, while a summer job in 1962 for a small newspaper fascinated him. At his Cranium Press he installed a small Chandler & Price letterpress and his work began in 1966 with his first book, which I believe was Richard Brautigan’s *Galilee Hitch-Hiker*, originally printed at the White Rabbit Press in 1958. At the time, he was heavily influenced by local poets Lew Welch, Philip Whalen, Gary Snyder, Robert Duncan, and Brautigan, and he wanted to print books of contemporary poetry.

Clifford and I became friends. I would visit him often and we would talk paper and printing. I would supply him with paper for his book printing needs and watched as he matured typographically and moved from offset to letterpress. Soon he rented larger quarters at 243 Collins Street, where he lived upstairs and had his printing shop in the basement. There he collaborated with folks like Holbrook Teter and the eccentric artist/illustrator Michael Myers, who met at Cranium and then formed their Zephyrus Image Press (1970–1982).

During this period Clifford apprenticed with the designer printer Peter Bailey at East Wind Printers. Then, in 1968, he began a lifelong friendship and apprenticeship with Adrian Wilson over on Telegraph Hill, and studied calligraphy with John Tarr and Thomas Ingmire, all the while printing his own projects at Cranium.

For ten years, between 1966 and 1976, Clifford Burke participated in that tradition in San Francisco. His mentors were the poet Lew Welch and the printers at Auerhahn Press, Dave Haselwood and Andrew Hoyem; Jack Stauffacher, the Greenwood Press; and Graham Mackintosh of White Rabbit Press.

During those years at Cranium, Clifford worked at various times with nearly every poet associated with the Black Mountain, Beat and Post-Beat schools of writing and he produced over one hundred books. Among them were Robert Creeley, Robert Duncan, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, Allen Ginsberg, Denise Levertov, Gary Snyder, Phillip Whalen, David Meltzer, Bill Bathurst, and Gino Clays-Sky.

Clifford, in turn, became a mentor to many of the young printers and bookmakers in the Bay Area. The Five Trees Press women — Kathy Walkup, Jaime Robles, Cheryl Miller and Cameron Bunker — and the folks at Turtle Island Press come to mind.

In 1977, Clifford closed Cranium Press and moved with his then wife Fenicia and two daughters to Anacortes, Washington. There he continued to work as "Clifford Burke, Printer" and published under the imprint of "Margaret's Press," named after his daughter. Clifford is the author of several books and articles on the printing craft including *Looking At Fine Printing* (1975); *Printing It: A Guide to Graphic Techniques for the Impecunious* (1981); and *Type from the Desktop: Designing With Type and Your Computer* (1990).

In 1980, Clifford came to my friend, the late David Belch, and myself as publishing partners in Scarab Press with the concept to publish his manuscript *Printing Poetry: A Workbook in Typographic Reification* (1980). This was to be a guide to the craft of fine bookmaking addressing, particularly, the concerns of small and private press printers who print contemporary poetry. David and I found this an unusual project to publish a hundred-page book for the author, who also designed and would physically print the book, for which we were lucky to have William Everson contribute a forward. The book sold well and also was available in sheets for binders and was even followed by an exhibition of those bindings sponsored by the Hand Bookbinders. The late Peter Howard's Serendipity Books has one for sale at \$300.

This book also guided his future. As Clifford states, “through the following years of writing, environmentalism, community work and raising kids, bits and pieces of the old Cranium Press stayed with me until, finally, through the discovery of the book *Printing Poetry*, Virginia Mudd and I met, and in 1990 combined our lives and resources into the printing studio and publishing venture, Desert Rose Press, and to our rural home in the Northern Desert of San Jose, New Mexico, where we now live.”

And, to top it off, Clifford is spending his time playing the baritone saxophone.

Recently, Clifford and Virginia gave his library of poetry, as well as his own books on print and typography, to The Book Club of California, where they are almost completely cataloged and shelved. We give great thanks for this donation.

Welcome back to San Francisco, Clifford Burke.

Dillon on Books

RICHARD H. DILLON

AMERICANS TOO YOUNG TO HAVE LIVED through the 1930s may hold a somewhat skewed view of that decade following Wall Street’s Crash of 1929, although the Great Depression did take place during the “Dirty (Dust Bowl) Thirties,” a time of national tension only ended by the greater stresses of World War II.

But it was not all doom and gloom in the 1930s. Remarkable achievements were made in engineering, like President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s pet projects: Grand Coulee Dam, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and Boulder Dam. Here, in the San Francisco Bay Area, we were treated to engineering that approached sculpture in the form of the Golden Gate Bridge; and we celebrated the twilight of peace with the Golden Gate International Exposition, a charming world’s fair on man-made Treasure Island (1939–1940). Back East, New York’s Broadway blazed with bright lights; and Hollywood produced movies of distinction, even wit. As for literature, there was an accelerated shift in style to the robust prose of John Steinbeck and Ernest

Hemingway, from that of their more genteel predecessors. This sea change in taste was, oddly, accompanied by a new interest in historical fiction: the novels of Walter D. Edmonds, Charles Nordhoff, James Norman Hall, and Kenneth Roberts.

Closely related in non-fiction to historical novels was Americana; grassroots American history. This was first apparent in guidebooks. The British Broadcasting Company's North American commentator, Alistair Cooke, belatedly noted in 1973 how important the so-called WPA Guides were in fostering narrative Americana. They were titles most often devoted to a single state of the Union. They were produced by the Writers' Program of the federal Works Progress Administration. Wrote Cooke: "America, which had no guidebooks worth the name, suddenly had a library of the best." Needless to say, original WPA guides are highly desired today by book collectors.

Lewis Gannett looked back in *Publishers Weekly* in 1941 to try to explain the booming presence of American regionalism in the book trade. He wrote: "Americans everywhere are looking at their country with new and curious eyes. It is as if we have never seen it before; as if we were Rip Van Winkles, rousing from a long sleep; or [were] immigrants, ourselves."

Gannett and other critics ascribed the sudden interest in our country's various regions to the sole benign aspect — American national pride — of the nation's otherwise unwholesome adoption of isolationism that grew out of bitter disillusion in the First World War.

This interest in grassroots American history now invaded academia as the first American Studies programs and appeared in university curricula, with disciplines deliberately mixed — history, geography, literature, folklore — in order to tell the whole continental story faithfully.

The key to the success of publishers' non-guidebook Americana was the theme of regionalism, as Carol Fitzgerald observed in her 2001 bibliography, *The Rivers of America (1937–1974): A Descriptive Bibliography: Including Biographies of the Authors, Illustrators, and Editors*, still in print (2 vols., \$125) from Oak Knoll Press (310 Delaware Street, New Castle DE 19720).

This is still the case with Ms. Fitzgerald's 2009 companion study, *Series Americana: Post-Depression-Era Regional Literature, 1938-1980* (2 vols., \$125,

Oak Knoll Press). At long last, we have a bibliography — and a splendid one — to document this literary and historiographical phenomenon which flourished especially after the Second World War. Her study is published in collaboration with John Y. Cole's Center for the Book at the Library of Congress.

The titles in the *Rivers* series have been widely recognized as the most impressive and important of the genre. They have been as equally widely reprinted. Now, with *Series Americana*, Ms. Fitzgerald completes her task by surveying the other major series in regional Americana.

In 978 pages of precise and insightful text, the bibliographer carefully examines thirteen series issued by nine publishers. Besides full biographical description of the first editions of every one of the 163 titles, she includes their publishing history. An excellent bonus is her addition of 242 biographical sketches of 237 authors, series editors, and as many of the books' illustrators as could be tracked down (like our area's John O'Hara Cosgrave). These mini-biographies, in many cases, present information nowhere else to be found. They even include notes on other books by series authors and references to key reviews of series books.

The twin volumes of *Series Americana* offer us compelling portraits of America's regions, as seen by gifted writers, a mix of (readable) academics and dependable freelance scholars, or "popular" historians.

Hastings House led off with a series that was atypical in that it featured "camera impressions" of (only) New England and by just one photographer, Samuel C. Chamberlain. Surprisingly, Cape Cod was not one of the ten areas featured in Hastings' American Landmarks Series.

Yet, Doubleday's dozen volumes in its Seaport Series typified the genre. Among the covered ports of call were William Martin Camp's *San Francisco: Port of Gold* (1947); *Tropic Landfall: The Port of Honolulu* (1942) by Clifford Gessler; and *Harbor of the Sun: The Story of the Port of San Diego* (1940) by Max Miller, author of the best seller, *I Cover the Waterfront* (1932).

Probably the best-known titles (after those in the *Rivers* set) were the twenty-eight volumes of the American Folkways Series from New York's Duell, Sloan & Pearce. (These were edited by the "poor man's Faulkner," Erskine Caldwell.)

First in the series was *Desert Country* (1941) by Edwin Corle, a writer esteemed by our own Lawrence Clark Powell. Stanford's Wallace Stegner was, of course, the ideal author of *Mormon Country* (1942). A pristine copy goes for almost \$1,000. The Book Club's Oscar Lewis saluted our mountains with his *High Sierra Country* (1955), while his old comrade-in-arms — literarily speaking — Gertrude Atherton took care of the Bay Area with her *Golden Gate Country* (1945).

Other titles in the lore and legend context were Alfred Power's *Redwood Country* (1949), and Carey McWilliam's *Southern California Country: An Island on the Land* (1946).

The little-known Vanguard Press of New York City was responsible for two series: the American Mountain Series and the American Customs Series. Roderick Peattie edited the *Pacific Coast Ranges* volume (1946). Among his contributors were UCLA historian John W. Caughey; Aubrey Drury of Save the Redwoods League; and Judy Van Der Veer, another favorite of Larry Powell. Peattie also edited *The Sierra Nevada* (1947), with chapters by Yosemite's Mary Tresidder; and an author better-known for California desert writing, Weldon Heald.

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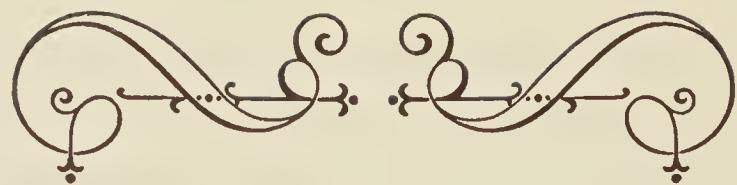
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SAVE THESE
CENTENNIAL DATES

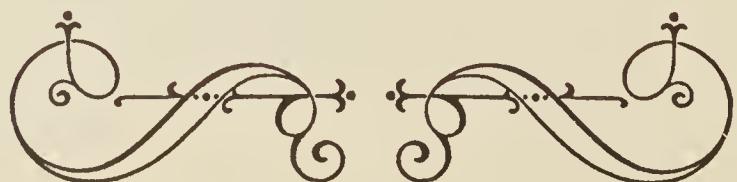
Pre-Centennial Poster Printing Party
was July 25, 2011. Other Broadside events
are in the works.

DECEMBER 12, 2011:
BCC Annual Gala
honoring women book artists

JUNE 2012:
Centennial Auction

OCTOBER 2012:
*A multi-day symposium about past and
future printing and literacy in California
culminating in a gala dinner*

DECEMBER 12, 2012:
*Centennial luncheon in homage to 1912
BCC founders*



In the other Vanguard series on customs, *Los Angeles Times* writer Lee Shippey penned *It's An Old California Custom* (1948).

The short-lived American Lakes Series by Bobbs-Merrill of Indianapolis produced *Sierra Nevada Lakes* (1949) by George H. and Bliss M. Hinkle; also *The Great Salt Lake* (1947) by Bancroft Library scholar Dale Morgan.

Something of a change of pace was Duell, Sloan & Pearce's Regional Murder Series. Joseph Henry Jackson, the *San Francisco Chronicle* book editor (and this writer's first boss as a reviewer) edited *San Francisco Murders* (1947). Joining Jackson as contributors were Oscar Lewis; mystery writers and *Chronicle* reviewers Anthony Boucher and Lenore Glenn Offord; and also *Chronicle* reporter/columnists John R. Bruce and Robert O'Brien. *Los Angles Murders* (also 1947) was edited by Craig Rice, mystery novelist; Erle Stanley Gardner (creator of defense attorney Perry Mason); and werewolf novelist Guy Endore.

Dutton's Society in America series brought us *The Spectacular San Franciscans* (1949) by Berkeley's Julia Cooley Altrocchi.

The American Trails Series was born twice, first in 1947 with a Bobbs-Merrill imprint on three titles. Santa Barbareño Jay Monaghan was the general editor. The series was revived by McGraw Hill in the 1960s, with A.B. Guthrie, Jr. (California author Ferol Egan's mentor) as general editor. Felix Riesenbergs, Jr. wrote *The Golden Road: The Story of California's Spanish Mission Trail* (1962), while UC Berkeley's George R. Stewart did the honors for *The California Trail: An Epic with Many Heroes (1841-1859)*, (1962). David Lavender's view of the Oregon Trail was titled *Westward Vision* (1963), and Wallace Stegner returned to Deseret with his book *The Gathering of Zion: The Story of the Mormon Trail* (1964), a \$500 book today. William Brandon's *Santa Fe Trail* was never finished.

In 1970, Ferol Egan, winner of the Book Club's Oscar Lewis Award, explored California Gold Rush trails across Mexico with his *El Dorado Trail*. In 1975, this reviewer's study of the Hudson's Bay Company route to California, *The Siskiyou Trail*, appeared. The final title of the series, *Winner Take All* (1977), by David Lavender, was an account of the trans-Canada fur trade canoe "trail."

Doubleday's Mainstream of America Series contained *The Age of Fighting Sail: The Story of the Naval War of 1812* (1956) by Berkeley's C.S. "Hornblower" Forester. Ubiquitous David Lavender wrote *Land of Giants: The Drive to the Pacific Northwest, 1750-1950* (1958), ending his tale only eight years before publication. *Men to Match My Mountains* (1959) by Irving Stone was the long story of the opening of the Far West.

Hastings House's American Procession Series, remarkably, drew no Californians as contributors, but Harper's Regions of America featured David Lavender again, with *The Rockies* (1968). David then doubled back, as it were, to write *California: Land of New Beginnings* (1972) and *The Southwest* (1980). Ojai's Lavender was, easily, the writer most called upon by Americana series publishers.

Prentice-Hall's American Forts Series is of interest for the books it planned, but failed to publish, as well as for those that did appear; like Oscar Lewis's *Sutter's Fort: Gateway to the Gold Fields* (1966), and *Fort Laramie and the Sioux Indians* (1967) by Santa Barbara's Remi Nadeau. Ms. Fitzgerald's sleuthing turned up the facts on two books killed by Prentice Hall as interest in regional Americana began to wane. Ferol Egan transformed his unpublished *Fort Churchill (Nevada)* into *Sand In a Whirlwind* (Doubleday, 1972), a history of the 1860 Paiute Indian War. This reviewer was at work on Fort Klamath when the axe fell on the series, but Prentice-Hall did publish it. The MS metamorphosed into *Burnt-Out Fires* (1973), a history of California's Modoc Indian War exactly a century before.

So thorough was the bibliographer's digging into ephemeral archives that she forced this writer to recall that in the 1970s he had originally planned to write *The Smoky Hill Trail*, across Kansas to the Colorado mines, in the American Trails Series, but changed his mind and switched to the more dramatic *Siskiyou Trail* of Hudson's Bay trappers.

Among other titles that Ms. Fitzgerald found were aborted was *Gold Rush Country* by Charis Weston, photographer Edward Weston's model and eventual wife.

Already, Nicholas Basbanes, the A. Edward Newton of our era — and then some! — has proposed that Carol Fitzgerald be made a Living National

Treasure of the USA, along the lines of classic Japanese potters and other artists. This reviewer can only “second the motion,” and beg the jurors of the Pulitzer and Nobel awards to add “Bibliography” to their Literature category and, at least, shortlist her for the prizes.

In saluting the superb bibliographical achievements of *The Rivers of America* and *Series Americana*, we cannot fail to note the essential work of our bibliographer’s editor; her husband, Jean Fitzgerald. This remarkable team has done book collectors — and ordinary devoted readers — an immense service.

News from the Library

THE ONLINE CATALOGING PROJECT HAS REACHED a major milestone as we prepare this message. We have completed cataloging the books on the shelves in the library and the Book Club’s own publications in the Gallery, more than 4,600 items. The catalog may be accessed by going to the BCC web page, clicking on the *Albert Sperisen Library* and then clicking on *Online Library Catalog*. There is still plenty to be done: some 300 pamphlets, the serials and the books on the open shelves in the Club rooms. After that, the ephemera.

We are pleased that the generosity of our members continues unabated. Since our last report, the last shipment of the magnificent gift of Virginia Mudd and Clifford Burke arrived on the last day of February; over 200 pieces of ephemera. Thanks to the online catalog, a month later we were able to pull all the items Clifford Burke selected to use in his memorable evening at the Club when he shared the story of his career as a printer.

Bo Wreden added to our store of ephemera with a dozen fine examples of local presses printed over a number of decades. Barbara Land picked up a number of items for us at the Antiquarian Book Fair, which she donated to the Library. Cathy DeForest — proprietor of the Jubilation Press — and her husband made a generous gift to the book fund which enabled us to buy a splendid three portfolios of twelve broadside poems each, published in a limited edition by the Press.

Our president, John Crichton, enriched our holdings of the Poltroon Press with a copy of *Pshaw!*, a thirty-year bibliography of the Poltroon Press with many illustrations of their productions. Carol Cunningham followed up her gift of her miniature collection last year with two albums and a folder of ephemera, mainly from her own Sunflower Press. Len Rothman gave us *San Francisco in maps and views*, compiled by Sally B. Woodbridge. Arthur Lyons added to our reference works on miniatures by giving us a copy of *The Neale M. Albert Collection of Miniature Designer Bindings*.

At the Fine Press sale at Pacific Book Auctions on April 7, we were able to purchase a complete set of *The Lark*, six books published by the Nonesuch Press, and *Letters Redrawn from the Trajan Inscription in Rome* by Edward M. Catich and published by him at his Catfish Press. Malcolm Whyte has contributed a fanciful poster, *Breaking the Library Code*, intended to introduce the library patron to the mysteries of the Dewey Decimal System (we use the Library of Congress classification system.) Maryland member Allan Mears spotted a copy of *How Many Miles from St. Jo? The Log of Sterling B. F. Clark, a Forty-niner, with Comments by Ella Sterling Mighels; Together with a Brief Autobiography of James Phelan, 1819-1892, Pioneer Merchant*, a 1929 publication of Taylor and Taylor, and asked us if we wanted it. Of course, we said "yes," and it is now safely ensconced in our library.

We visited with Mary Louisa Laird at a Colophon Club meeting and told her we had virtually nothing from her Quelquefois Press. She responded by bringing no less than six books on the occasion of the Oscar Lewis Awards. One of the awardees, Philip Choy, very kindly left two of his publications with us: *Canton Footprints: Sacramento's Chinese Legacy* and *A History of the Chinese in California: a Syllabus*; and has since sent a third: *The Coming Man: 19th century Perceptions of the Chinese*, so he is now fittingly well represented in our library. Thank you, Philip!

After a period of thirty years and one book, David Pascoe has revived the Nawakum Press and has published three handsome volumes. We are grateful to David that he has seen fit to send copies of all three to the BCC for the library. For *Undersea* by Rachel L. Carson, San Francisco artist

Dugald Stermer was commissioned by the Press to illustrate the text with graphite and watercolor illustrations. The illustrations are printed on the edition paper, which is Hahnemühle Biblio. The text has been set in Granjon and Burgues Script typefaces and letterpress printed by Norman Clayton of Classic Letterpress in Ojai, California. The book is bound with Carson Crackle, a handmade paper designed by Bridget O'Malley at Cave Papers in Minneapolis, Minnesota, especially for the edition. Clayton also printed *The Indigo Bunting: Fifteen Love Poems* by Robert Bly, while Patrick Reagh printed the third volume, *Norfolk Isle and the Chola Widow* by Hermann Melville. Full details can be found at <http://nawakumpress.com/index.html>.

We noticed that our holdings of miniature books printed at the Juniper von Phitzer Press were spotty, at best, and contacted Norman Hiemstra and Lloyd Neilson asking if they could help us fill in the gaps. A week later they appeared at the Club rooms with a shoe box full of twenty-nine miniatures and a piece of ephemera. Their association with the Club goes back a long way and we are delighted to be back in touch; and thanks to their thoughtfulness have a much better representation of their fascinating productions.

Richard T. Hill has sent us a copy of his *Mela: the Life and Art of Melanie Kent Steinhardt*, a loving tribute to an extraordinary woman, his grandmother, published at his own Rabbit Hill Press. The undersigned has contributed some fifty items from his own collection over the past several months. The Alcuin Society, a sister organization in Vancouver, sent us their most recent publication, *Takao Tanabe: Sometime Printer*, a retrospective review of his work designed and produced by Robert R. Reid. They tell us a few copies are still available for sale (<http://www.alcuinsociety.com/>). We visited with Carolee Campbell at the Codex Exhibition and asked if she had any stray ephemera she could send us. Much to our gratification, she packed up seventeen fine pieces from her Ninja Press and dispatched them to us.

Kathy Walkup has given us eight of her own fine publications. Member David Bromer in Boston has sent us a copy of his *Aun Aprendo: A Comprehensive Bibliography of the Writings of Aldous Leonard Huxley*. Bob Chandler dropped by and left us a copy of Rita Bottoms' *Riffs & Ecstasies*. Pat Reagh has donated

a copy of his moving tribute to his father, *Charles William Reagh, Printed for his Friends, June 28, 1992*. Gabriel-Richard Rummonds sent us the typescript of the fascinating talk he gave to the BCC earlier this season, together with CDs of his power point presentation: a welcome gift for the archives.

We invite all our readers to think of us as they winnow out their shelves. We are always here to provide a good home for your treasures. See our web page for our collection priorities: <http://www.bccbooks.org/sperisen.htm>.

— HENRY L. SNYDER, *Chair, Library Committee*

Serendipity

THE CLUB'S OSCAR LEWIS AWARDS on March 28 came off in grand style, thanks to Committee Chair Paul Robertson. Past President Kathleen Burch designed the graceful, informative invitation spotlighting our awardees, and we print sketches of their lives and accomplishments elsewhere in these columns: Phil Choy by David Rubiales, and Clifford Burke by George Fox. Phil Choy is a pioneer in Chinese-American history, while fine printer Clifford Burke donated his incomparable library to the Club.

On May 7, the Friends of the Bancroft Library presented their prestigious Hubert Howe Bancroft Award to one of their greatest friends, Director Charles B. Faulhaber, who retired in June after sixteen eventful years. His fun stuff included: rejoicing at a centenary of Bancroft Library service in 2006; widening the audience for the incomparable collection of Jewish culture, including strong holdings on the American West, formerly at the Judah L. Magnes Museum in Berkeley; and, last fall, publishing a best-seller: volume one of the *Autobiography of Mark Twain*. Bancroft sleuths deciphered Sam Clemens' order of arrangement that had eluded all previously. Two more portions of Twainiana are forthcoming.

Faulhaber will be best remembered, though, for strengthening the library building to last another century. Besides always difficult fund-raising, this 2001 project involved putting part of the collection in storage and moving part to a temporary reading room on Durant, retrofitting the building (including

changing floor levels), and putting it all back together for a gala reopening in 2008. Visit the tastefully elegant reception area on the Second Floor. We hear that even Sir Francis Drake's "Plate of Brasse" made it back on display.

The Friends of the Bancroft Library had a further award to give. Kenneth E. Hill, an amazing collector of Pacific voyages, and the BCC's beloved Dr. Al Shumate funded a UC Berkeley undergraduate book collecting prize to instill bibliomania at an impressionable age. Contestants submit fifty books and describe the coherence of their collection in a thousand-word essay. This year's winner of the \$600 Hill-Shumate Book Collecting Prize was Kathleen O'Connell for her "Library of Books in Warfare: Military History and Fiction." She emphasized World War II.

Alas, the roster of those going to the Golden Hills does not diminish. Kevin Mullen (1935–2011), a smart cop (1959–1986), engaging conversationalist, and good historian, departed on April 18, accompanied by a 3.4 earthquake. His loss is memorable, and happened on the same day — and at about the same time — as the shattering earthquake that occurred in 1906.

We met Kevin as the indefatigable historian and astute observer of the San Francisco Police Department, who personally knew of every officer since 1849, and who investigated every recorded homicide from then until now.



MEMBERS, WHETHER NEW OR LONGSTANDING, are our best resource for sustaining the continued organizational development and governance of the Book Club. Nominations are now open for Board of Directors positions, which will commence in October.

Members are encouraged to submit nominations to Executive Director Lucy Rodgers Cohen via e-mail, lucyrcohen@bccbooks.org, or by mail, to the Book Club by August 16, 2011.

Mullen is the author of *Let Justice be Done* (1989), analyzing the Vigilance Committee of 1851; *Dangerous Strangers* (2005), discussing homicide patterns from the Gold Rush to present; the award-winning *The Toughest Gang in Town* (2005), telling delightful stories of the San Francisco police; *Chinatown Squad* (2008), describing policing that enclave from the Gold Rush to the present; and *The Egg Man's Son* (2009), sharing memories of growing up in Irish San Francisco.

On June 12, family and friends gathered at the United Irish Cultural Center to celebrate that he had been here. We ate up good victuals together with praise for history. State Senator Leland Yee compared dry college texts to Mullen's lively and perceptive stories behind the stories in *Chinatown Squad*. Police Chief Greg Suhr, whose selection was not a sure thing, but is now a Suhr Thing, had not known Mullen on the Force. However, whenever the newspapers carried something on gangs, there was Mullen on the phone filling in past lessons from the Gold Rush to the present. His historical writing was always relevant.

Talent runs with Kevin's siblings, too. Sister Sheila, gratefully, keeps this *Quarterly* in line, wielding a heavy sixteenth edition of the Chicago Manual of Style.

Legendary book dealer Peter Howard (1938–2011) departed on the last day of March. On May 7, more than a hundred crowded among the cramped shelves and book-stacked floors of Serendipity Books in Berkeley to honor a remarkable man. He was, as Bo Wreden said, “a most brilliant, if sometimes difficult and eccentric, antiquarian bookseller.” We recall learned treatises published on how to price books at 1201 University Avenue, which Nancy Kosenka will keep open. President John Crichton will share his memories of Peter Howard.

Sadly, we report the passing on May 10, of gentle, genial Vince Lozito (1921–2011), mainstay of the Sacramento Book Collectors Club and Mr. Membership Committee of the BCC. Before his bibliophilic days, Lozito

served this country thirty-two years in the Army Air Corps and the United States Air Force. On December 7, 1941, he was at Fort Armstrong at the entrance to Pearl Harbor, pulling injured sailors and marines from the water. Bob Dickover has penned a few thoughts in remembrance.

Denny Kruska, author of the Club's 2009 book on James Mason Hutchings (still available!), is behind an exhibit at the Santa Clara University Library, "The Lure and Lore of Yosemite: A 19th Century View." It runs from April 1 to August 31.

Similarly, in 1990 Ward Schumaker illustrated the famed Yolla Bolly Press edition of Gertrude Stein's *Paris, France* (1940), and, to his delight, it appears in "Seeing Gertrude Stein," a complex and rewarding exhibit at San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum running from May 12 through September 6. That pairs nicely with an exhibit diagonally across Mission Street at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art: "The Steins Collect: Matisse, Picasso, and the Parisian Avant-Garde," May 21 through September 6. "See the collection that sparked an artistic revolution — reunited for the first time in a generation — and meet the extraordinary cast of characters behind the birth of modern art." Likewise, Shumaker whimsically illustrated with brush and ink Yolla Bolly's 1999 edition of *Two Kitchens in Provence* by M.F.K. Fisher, subject of the 2008 BCC keepsake.

The SF MOMA Stein exhibit overlapped a display of the talent of Weird Ed Muggeridge. Or what else do you call a photographer who broke his head riding an overland stagecoach, ignored his wife, then shot her lover, and had the absurd idea that a trotting horse could have all four feet off the ground at the same time? "Helios: Edweard Muybridge [as he Saxonated himself] in a Time of Change" closed in June, but left a fine volume by Philip Brookman. Our only quibbles are that it cost \$80, a price some ordinary, routine academic books are reaching, and the caption writers did not know California geography. For instance, the Murphy's Big Trees are stuck with Yosemite.

Norman Clayton, our previous printer for the QN-L writes to us in April from Ojai (756 South Rice Road, 93023; (805) 640-1418) that his Classic Letterpress is thriving. "Originally motivated to benefit my family," Clayton says, "the move has been a boon for my business with a much larger space for my letterpress now. I am now doing less job work and more book printing. This month I took on an apprentice, as I also wish for mine to be a teaching press."

He recently printed two works for David Pascoe's Nawakum Press in Santa Rosa (3731 Deauville Place, 95403; david@nawakumpress.com). The first, in an edition of a hundred, with twenty deluxe, is Rachel L. Carson's first article to reach national acclaim, *Undersea* from the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1937, and illustrated by San Francisco artist Dugald Sterner. The second, *The Indigo Bunting, 15 Love Poems* by Robert Bly, the poet laureate of Minnesota, comes from a 1985 work, *Loving a Woman in Two Worlds*. Like the former, the total run is one hundred copies, but the deluxe edition of twenty has sold out. The regular editions are \$485 for *Undersea* and \$285 for *Indio Bunting*. We are pleased that Clayton and the Nawakum Press are doing well. As Henry Snyder reports, Pascoe donated copies to our library.

In August 1990, the *Bookdealer* displayed a five-page spread on bookman John Windle, Tibetan Buddhist monk and peace marcher in the 1980s, or, as Windle quipped, "I had my [19]60s in the '80s." In the 1960s, Windle busily learned the book trade in London and was on his way to becoming the foremost dealer of William Blake. Fully grasping the Internet, Windle issues catalogues, illustrations and all on CD-ROMs. Meantime, his wife Chris Loker has become the leading West Coast dealer in antiquarian (since 1970) children's books.

Windle, though, finds the computer no substitute for an actual store, and asks, if you are wishing to spend \$2,000 on a book, "would you like to be able to visit a dealer in a shop where he has done business for many years and can show you different copies of a book, discuss what is available on the market, help to develop your interest in the subject, and generally be available for consultation, or would you rather do business with a website that can disappear at the flick of a switch?"

For three weeks we were “flicked” by our e-mail account, which decided we did not exist. We felt lost, unloved, and cut away as we attempted to rebuild our list of e-mail addresses. However, the computer byte equivalent of type lice relented, opened its jaws, and we are once again whole.

Joys of the electronic world also abound elsewhere. Libraries around the United States are in battle with publisher HarperCollins. Why? If a library purchases a printed book for \$30, it may loan it until it wears out. However, if one buys an e-book from HarperCollins, the book self-destructs after it circulates twenty-six times. If popular, the library must then acquire another \$30 copy.

The demise of the printed book is vastly overstated and we have therefore taken refuge and solace in Mount Book, an eruption of unshelved books behind our desk. It has grown to be half a cord (4 x 4 x 8 feet). Mount Book does suffer from instability and frequent cataclysmes, when Norton, Tootsie, and especially Yogi become playful. To aid the growth of such newly formed geographical features, we have turned to *The Protocols of Used Bookstores*.

In this 2010 *Guide to Dealing with Certain Perils which Could be Encountered in a Used Bookstore*, Toronto bookseller David Mason makes forty-four points, generally pointing up the boorishness of customers. His closing remark is poignant: “The truth is, booksellers believe that what they sell is important to civilization and that their presence contributes to that civilization. And sometimes they don’t have much more than that conviction to keep them going.” Mason’s bookish words are yours for \$10 from David Mason, Fine and Rare Books, 366 Adelaide Street West, Suite LLO4, Toronto, ON, Canada, M5V 1R9.

Turning more to art, Rita Bottoms, head of special collections at UC Santa Cruz from 1966 to 2003, interfaced with the art, photography, and literary worlds. Her short *Riffs & Ecstasies: True Stories* (2011) presents musings, poetry, and intellectual and emotional relationships with composer John Cage, artist and writer Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and artists and collagists David Hockney and Ray Johnson. The cover says it all, “Paris, dreams, lamentations, snapshots, poems, tableaux, rubrications, remembrance,

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Among others, Bottoms promoted Kenneth Patchen and his "painted poems," such as were featured at the Legion of Honor between November 2009 and March 2010 as "Kenneth Patchen: Painted Books and Picture-Poems." Earlier this year, Club members saw these treasures up close. The Legion's display came from that artfully-choked master printer, Jonathan Clark, who, in turn, sent them to the Club rooms in January as "Out of the World of Kenneth Patchen: A Centenary Exhibition."

This versatile printer, photographer, and binder knew Kenneth and Miriam Patchen as a 1960s teenager in Palo Alto. Closing night of April 11 was magnificent, Bo Wreden reported, with conversation and camaraderie, and a marvelous jazz trio. Clark, in his insightful talk, observed that while Patchen suffered through life from debilitating back pain, almost miraculously his creativity and his enduring sense of social justice rose above his own suffering.

Patchen used type in innovative ways to print poetry, but do you wish to see what printers could do with type and color on small cards? Go to the artistic printing site maintained by Arizona BCC member Richard Sheaff. In the 1880s, trade cards became the rage, and printers lavished most attention on their own cards. Self-advertising brought customers. Sheaff shows spenderiferous ones, many of his own, but also from the collections of San Franciscans Jonathan Bulkley and George Fox. Admire them and quirky printed ephemera at <http://www.sheaff-ephemera.com>.

In mid-May we engaged in skullduggery to visit Ann Whipple, erstwhile executive secretary of the Club, on her four-acre ranch off Mountain Ranch Road in good skull country. As we enjoyed a delicious lunch, we relaxed in an airy room — running kitchen to living room — with light flooding in on three sides. Whipple has decorated it with prints from Bay Area artists, including Malette Dean and our own QN-L printer, Richard Seibert. A grape-vined porch surrounds her Calaveras abode on four sides, Willow Creek gurgles nearby, and swallows keep watch over her front door.

In response to the devastating 9.0 earthquake and forty-foot tsunami that devastated Japan on March 11, friends around the country involved with Peace Winds America organized a “Bakesale for Japan” on April 2. Numerous Bay Area and Southern California businesses participated, including Bi-Rite Market, 18 Reasons, and SPQR in San Francisco, Pizzaiolo in Oakland, and Gioia Pizzeria in Berkeley. Locally, Samin Nosrat organized the effort and raised over four thousand of the total \$140,000. Among art for donations, QN-L printer Richard Seibert provided two prints, a small circular red-and-white one of the “Bakesale for Japan” logo, and a large one with a single asparagus stalk moving in and out of a red square.

While all are “oohing” and “ahhing” over the Club’s latest, Peter Hanff’s *Cyclone on the Prairies*, printer Peter Koch is curating a bookish exhibit at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford. His co-plotters are Alison Roth of the Cantor, and Roberto Trujillo, head of Special Collections, and chair of the Club’s Publication Committee, which produced the above wizardly spellbinder. If Oz waz youz, I’d Koch this summer display of “The Art of the Book in California.” It is no Baum.

The display and its catalogue feature four noted presses besides Koch’s: Foolscap Press (Peggy Gotthold and Lawrence G. Van Velzer); Moving Parts Press (Felicia Rice); Ninja Press (Carolee Campbell); and Turkey Press (Harry and Sandra Reese). Canadian Robert Bringhurst, he of *The Elements of Typographic Style* (1992–2008), poetically contributes “What the Ink Sings to the Paper,” and “A Chronology of Fine Printing in California.” With 138 color illustrations and 132 pages, this \$30 bargain is available at Stanford and Peter Koch Printers.

A catalog arrived in our sanctum from a new Los Angeles bookseller, John Howell. No, he is not a ghostly recreation of the Emperor of Post Street, but an unrelated John Howell. However, he has the good taste of his namesake. His first catalog of 113 items is devoted to Book Club of California publications. Contact John Howell for Books at 5205 ½ Village Green, Los Angeles, CA 90016-5027; (310) 367-9720; kjrhowell@mac.com.

Within the past few years, the San Francisco gay community has grown greatly, become vastly visible, and politically powerful. In modern times, beginning with the Beats of the 1950s, it has infinitely influenced art and literature. With such an educated base, gay bookstores should flourish. Such now is not the case. *A Different Light*, a beacon among bookstores, dimmed and disappeared at the end of April. It was the last in California to sell new gay books.

Its departure, due to competition from cheaper, taxless, online sellers, ends a niche begun by the Adonis in the Tenderloin, which opened in 1966 the first gay bookshop in the United States. "From the moment it was founded" in 1985, Gerard Koskovich, a curator at the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender History Museum stated, *A Different Light* "became a cultural center for the emerging queer community."

Taking its name from a gay science fiction novel by San Francisco author Elizabeth Lynn, *A Different Light* became a gathering place for activists

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and community builders. Every important English-writing author gave readings there, and A Different Light marketed anything printed on paper. Its first Outwrite Conference of gay writers in 1990 drew a thousand. Now 489 Castro Street, where Market, 17th, and Castro Streets form a six-rayed asterisk, is dark.

“Booksellers really are a special breed. No one in their right mind would take up clerking in a book store for the salary, and no one in their right mind would want to own one — the margin of profit is too small. So it has to be a love of readers and reading that makes them do it — along with first dibs on the new books.” This quote is attributed to the Guernsey Literary & Potato Peel Pie Society, a learned and gourmet institution set forth in a 2007 novel about that island under World War II German occupation.

We found this quote in Hooked on Books, a small independent bookstore at 1975 Tice Valley Boulevard near Rossmoor in Walnut Creek. Our better half goes there regularly to satiate her appetite for romance novels of the English Regency period. The announcement that greeted us, though, was a notification it was going out of business at the end of June.

For forty years, Hooked on Books was at Main Street and Locust Streets in Walnut Creek, and, for the past nine years, here. Each time, it could not make a deal with its landlord. “Lost our Lease” is the refrain in both cases, and another independent book store will not make its half century. Its demise follows Bonanza Books in Walnut Creek and Bay Books in Concord. With the closing of our local Borders, and Barnes & Noble not carrying torrid romance novels with their salacious covers, our computer illiterate Mrs. is forced to seek online. Was there really life before computers and the Internet?



The Annual Meeting of The Book Club of California will be held on Tuesday, October 18, 2011. The meeting will take place at 2 p.m. in the Gallery Room of the Club at 312 Sutter Street, Suite 500, San Francisco 94108.

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